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chemical etches remove the un-reacted film (cobalt) from the spacers 102 and other dielectrics.

IN THE CLAIMS

The entire set of presently pending claims is reproduced below for the convenience of the Examiner. Amended claims are indicated as such in the parenthetical following the claim number. Further, enclosed herewith is a separate paper entitled "Version With Markings To Show Changes Made" which corresponds to the amendments to the claims made herein.

Please cancel claims 12, 13, 29-38 and 40-44.

Please amend claims 1 and 39.

Please add new claims 45-49.

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1. (Amended) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:
forming a first dielectric layer over a base substrate;
forming a damascene trench in said first dielectric layer, said damascene trench having a gate area and a local interconnect area;
forming a gate oxide layer on said base substrate within said gate area of said damascene trench;
filling said damascene trench with a conductive material; and,
removing said first dielectric layer to define a damascene gate structure and a damascene local interconnect structure, said damascene local interconnect structure forming a connection to said base substrate.

2. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, further comprising forming an isolation trench in said base substrate before said first dielectric layer is formed.

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3. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 2, wherein at least a portion of said damascene trench at least partially overlies said isolation trench.

4. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 2, wherein said isolation trench formation comprises:

depositing a pad oxide layer over said base substrate;
depositing a nitride layer over said pad oxide layer;
forming a mask over said nitride layer;
etching through portions of said nitride layer and said pad oxide layer and etching into said base substrate defining an isolation trench opening in said base substrate;
stripping away said mask;
filling said isolation trench opening with a dielectric material; and,
removing said pad oxide layer and said nitride layer.

5. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, wherein said first dielectric layer formation comprises depositing a conformal inter-layer dielectric material over said base substrate.

6. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, wherein said damascene trench formation comprises:

forming a patterned mask over said first dielectric layer;
etching through said first dielectric layer to said base substrate in areas defined by said patterned mask; and,
stripping said patterned mask from said first dielectric layer.

7. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, further

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comprising providing at least one implant within said base substrate through said damascene trench.

8. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, wherein said gate oxide layer formation comprises:

growing an oxide layer on said base substrate;

forming a patterned mask over said semiconductor device, said pattern arranged to expose at least a portion of said oxide layer within said local interconnect area;

etching away the exposed portion of said oxide layer; and,

stripping said patterned mask from said semiconductor device.

9. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 8, further comprising providing a contact implant within said base substrate through said damascene trench prior to stripping said patterned mask.

10. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, wherein said conductive material comprises a polysilicon material.

11. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 10, further comprising forming a silicide layer over said polysilicon material within said gate area of said damascene trench.

14. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, further comprising forming lightly doped drain regions in said base substrate after removing said first dielectric layer, said lightly doped drain regions formed within said base substrate adjacent to said damascene gate structure and said damascene local interconnect structure.

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15. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, further comprising forming spacers against the vertical walls of said damascene gate structure and said damascene local interconnect structure.

16. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, further comprising:

forming lightly doped drain regions in said base substrate after removing said first dielectric layer, said lightly doped drain regions formed within said base substrate adjacent to said damascene gate structure and said damascene local interconnect structure;

forming spacers against the vertical walls of said damascene gate structure and said damascene local interconnect structure; and,

forming doped source/drain regions in said base substrate after forming said spacers such that said base substrate is doped more deeply into said base substrate adjacent to said spacers than into said base substrate underneath said spacers.

39. (Amended) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device comprising:

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forming an isolation trench in a base substrate

forming a first dielectric layer over said base substrate;

forming a first patterned mask over said first dielectric layer;

etching through said first dielectric layer to said base substrate in areas defined by said first patterned mask to define a damascene trench in said first dielectric layer, said damascene trench having a gate area and a local interconnect area; and positioned such that at least a portion of said damascene trench at least partially overlies said isolation trench;

stripping said first patterned mask from said first dielectric layer;

growing an oxide layer on said base substrate, said oxide layer within said gate area of said damascene trench defining a gate oxide layer;

forming a second patterned mask over said semiconductor device, said second

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patterned mask arranged to expose at least a portion of said oxide layer within said local interconnect area;

etching away the exposed portion of said oxide layer within said damascene trench;
providing at least one contact implant within said base substrate through said damascene trench;

stripping said second patterned mask from said semiconductor device;
depositing a conductive layer comprising a conductive material over said device such that said conductive layer fills said damascene trench;

planarizing said conductive layer down to the surface of said dielectric layer;
removing said first dielectric layer to define a damascene gate structure and a damascene local interconnect structure;

forming lightly doped drain regions in said base substrate adjacent to said damascene gate structure and said damascene local interconnect structure;

depositing a spacer layer over said device;
anisotropically etching said spacer layer such that spacers are formed over the portions of said base substrate where said lightly doped drain regions are formed; and
forming doped source/drain regions in said base substrate after forming said spacers such that said base substrate is doped more deeply into said base substrate adjacent to said spacers than into said base substrate underneath said spacers.

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Please add the following new claims:

45. (New) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, wherein said local interconnect area partially overlies an isolation trench formed in said base substrate.

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46. (New) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, further comprising forming a plurality of local interconnect areas in said damascene trench.

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47. (New) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 1, further comprising forming a plurality of gate areas in said damascene trench.

48. A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 2, wherein said isolation trench comprises a shallow trench isolation structure.

49. (New) A method of fabricating a semiconductor device according to claim 6, wherein said gate area and said local interconnect area of said damascene trench are both formed by said patterned mask and etching.